



February 26, 2024
General Membership Meeting

We were quite fortunate to have **Dr. Kevin McGowan**, Superintendent at Brighton Central School, as our featured speaker for our most recent General Membership meeting. Dr. McGowan was selected as the NYS Superintendent of the Year and also the National Superintendent of the Year. As you can imagine, Dr. McGowan has been asked to speak on many occasions over the past several months, and it was quite an honor to host him at our meeting on February 26. During his dynamic presentation, Dr. McGowan encouraged those in the audience to participate in a thought exchange, regarding achievement for all students. If you have not done so already, please visit: tejoin.com. That will take you to a Thought Exchange website. Once there, you can join Dr. McGowan's Thought Exchange by inserting the following 9-digit code: **382-242-955**. After you have inserted that code, you can join with a prompt from Dr. McGowan, regarding "What should a leader do, as a school board member or as a superintendent, principal, administrator, to ensure achievement for all and the success of the team?" I think you will find the thought exchange with Dr. McGowan to be quite interesting!

- Steve Miskell

Board Clerk Workshop

Thank you to all the Board Clerks who attended a workshop on February 15th. We had a great turnout of member and non-member districts. Thank you also to our presenters:

Sara Visingard, Kate Reid, and Kristin Warner



A few Board Clerk Responses:

- ~ Just wanted to say "thanks" for the board clerk workshop! I learned from the presentation and the presenters were very nice and helpful. Lunch was great too! It was good to get together with other board clerks – some of which I hadn't met yet.
- ~ Thank you so much for organizing today's clerk workshop. It was great. I always enjoy this one and get a lot from it.
- ~ Thank you again for facilitating today's District Clerk workshop. It was very informative, and it put me in touch with some great new clerk "resources".

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS WITH
UPCOMING 4CSBA EVENTS:**



March 2, 2024

Zoom
Prospective School Board Member Seminar
Sponsored by: **Bond Schoeneck & King Attorneys**

March 19, 2024

Hybrid - WFL BOCES Conference Center/Zoom
Board of Directors Meeting

March 22, 2024

WFL BOCES Conference Center
2ND Annual Spring Education Conference

May 16, 2024

Club 86, Geneva
49TH Annual Meeting
Guest Speaker - **Zach Arenz**
2024 New York State Teacher of the Year
Instrumental & General Music Teacher at
Flower Rochester City School 54
We would love to have your Music Teachers join us!

NYS Regent Adrian Hale will close the evening with a few remarks.

May 30, 2024

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Conference Center
Get Acquainted Evening
For newly elected BOE members along with their Superintendent and Board President

June 15, 2024

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Conference Center
Mandated Governance Training

July 20, 2024

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Conference Center
Mandated Fiscal Training

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Location: WFL BOCES Conference Center

Registration 8:00-8:45 am

Opening Remarks 8:45-9:00 am

David Little - Rural Schools Executive Director - Emcee

Opening Presentation 9:00-9:45 am

John Kelly - Coordinator of Safety and Security, WFL BOCES and
Matthew Miraglia - President/CEO, CLPS Consultants - TAP App:
"Before and After School and Special Events Security & Best Practices for Schools"

2 Break Out Sessions 10:00-10:45 and 11:00-11:45 am

Andy Doell - Superintendent, Bloomfield CSD "Teacher Recruitment & Retention of teachers in Rural Districts"

Lorianne DeForest - Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES and President of the Jamesville-Dewitt School Board of Education "Data & The Role Of The Board"

Darci D'Ercole - NYSSBA's Director of Leadership Development "Better Board Leadership- Better boards set the tone and lead by example. The top things that better boards do when they lead well."

Patrick Longo - NYSSBA's Member Relations Manager "A Culture of Leadership"

Alexis Clifton - Director of the Teaching/Learning Center, Suny Geneseo "Artificial Intelligence - Let's Chat About ChatGPT - Generative AI tools like ChatGPT have already caused a giant upheaval in how we think about writing as an expression of our personal thought and understanding. You've read text and perhaps even seen student work that incorporates it. This conversation will look at using tools like ChatGPT for professional and personal tasks; what it means for student work; and what, if anything, we should be doing differently in our professional practices as a response to it."

Dr. Carl Stokes Jr. - Author, Keynote Speaker, Social Worker, and Professor of Human Services, Erie Community College "Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: I'm sure you thought you understood...but listen to this!"

Lunch 11:45-12:30 pm

Afternoon Session 12:30-3:30 pm

Keynote Speaker: David Budz - 3rd grade school teacher for 7 years, then FBI for 20, now currently Executive Director of OpOverwatch. David will present his most recent presentation on "Prevention and Response to Violent Situations in Our Schools"

David has offered to stay for a Q&A following his presentation

PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR

2ND ANNUAL SPRING EDUCATION CONFERENCE



FRIDAY, March 22, 2024

← CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

C&S Companies
Construction Management Group

For sponsoring our
2nd Annual Spring
Education Conference
Keynote Speaker



Campus
Construction Management Group

For sponsoring our
2nd Annual Spring
Education Conference
Superintendents Lunch



Rural Schools Association

David Little, Esq.
Executive Director
For Emceeding our
2nd Annual Spring Education Conference





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As a reminder, the greatest advocacy need is to provide our legislators with specific examples of current issues, needs and concerns we are facing, which can be used to back up their budget negotiations on our behalf. Our Legislators strongly encourage all school districts to provide them with specific examples of how these issues are impacting the students, staff, faculty, administrators, school district and school communities. Please consider sharing your stories with your legislative representatives and the governor.

Be sure to read the message from Julie Nevelizer and Emily Fisher for details on the 2024 NYSSBA Lobby Day. Member representatives met with our state legislators and/or their staff to provide a clearer understanding, and specific examples of the impact current issues have on the public schools in our region. I'd like to personally thank the Legislative Committee for their ongoing commitment and tireless advocacy efforts. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Advocacy at the Federal level is also handled through the Legislative Committee. Recommendations currently being reviewed address issues regarding:

- Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA/ESEA)
- Early Childhood
- Child Nutrition
- Reaffirming the Role of School Boards
- School Choice Vouchers and Tuition Tax Credits
- Fulfilling the Promise with Sufficient, Sustained Funding
- School based Medicaid & Healthcare Reform

I encourage you to review the details of the Four County School Board Association's 2024 State Recommendations provided in the [2024 State Position Paper](#) attached to this newsletter and also available online on the Four County SBA's website, members only page, under the Legislative Committee meeting minutes.

In the event there are other issues you would like us to advocate for, or other recommendations you would like us to support you on, please let us know. If you would like to join a Legislative Committee meeting, the committee meets in Zoom from 9:00-10:30 am on the 2nd Saturday of each month, September-June.

Upward and Onward,

Joe McNamara

Four County SBA President
Seneca Falls BOE and WFL BOCES BOE
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MESSAGE FROM A FOUR COUNTY SBA BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER

In late January, close to 1,000 educators and school board members traveled from over 40 states to Washington, DC to attend NSBA's Equity Symposium and Advocacy Institute. Each attendee was committed to achieving a common goal; ensuring that all students have access to an exceptional and equitable public education. I had the distinct privilege to represent the Seneca Falls Central School district at this amazing event.

This year, mental health advocate Alex Boyé, was the Equity Symposium's keynote speaker and gave a very engaging and dynamic talk. His presentation focused on the power of positivity and that creating a welcoming environment for our students was a key step to ensuring their educational success. He encouraged us to always make the positives outweigh the negatives and to teach our children to "change the world by being yourself."

The Equity Symposium was an excellent bridge into the Advocacy Institute. The diverse breakout sessions taught us to continue to collaborate and communicate with each other in order to do what is best for kids. The most important take home message for me was this: As educators and school board members, we should remember that being an advocate means being a better role model and that student outcomes won't change until adult behaviors change.

The opening session for the Advocacy Institute was Kymyona Burk, a Senior Policy Fellow in Early Literacy. She spoke about the importance of implementing legislature that aligns with the instructional practices of the Science of Reading. Her message was that districts who focused on early identification, coaching for teaching, individual learning plans, educator training and parent communication have seen significant improvements in their literacy data.

The final day, January 30th, was NSBA Day on Capitol Hill. I joined several other school board members from New York as well as Government Relations Representatives from NYSSBA while we met with Senator Kristen Gillibrand and Congresswoman Claudia Tenney. We advocated for all NY State children as well as the students in our individual districts. Among the topics discussed were Title I and II funding, electric bus mandates, SALT deduction repeal, universal school meals and availability of mental health resources for our students. During the meetings, it was made apparent to our legislators that their agendas reflect their priorities and our students would benefit greatly from being made one of these priorities.

Denise Lorenzetti

Seneca Falls Board of Education





MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

As February recess comes to an end, I hope everyone was able to spend quality time with family and friends as well as rest and recharge. With spring right around the corner and warmer weather on the way, it's hard to believe we only have 4 months left in the school year! Where did the time go? I know that these next 4 months will be busy with spring sports, musicals, concerts, junior prom, senior ball, final exams, learning, and growing. Some of us will be preparing for summer activities, while others are finalizing college plans. It is a very busy time of year for most of us, our students, staff, and parents!

We as school boards will be getting ready for budget votes and the next election cycle for board members. It is always a busy time finalizing plans and looking towards the future. As a reminder, our Prospective School Board Member Seminar is March 2nd at 9:00. We also have our 2nd Annual Spring Education Conference on March 22nd, and our Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 16th. We would love to see you there!

Sunday March 10th is when we will be setting our clocks ahead and gaining more sunshine in our day! How are we as school board members able to bring sunshine into the lives of our students, our districts, and our communities? We can attend sporting and music events in our schools showing our support. We can attend student art shows, musical performances, award ceremonies, and graduation ceremonies that celebrate our students. We can make sure we are staying current on continuing education so that we are bringing our best, most informed selves to board meetings. How will you support your district and add some sunshine in these next 4 months?

I wish you health, happiness, and continued success in this school year.

Carrie Resch

Four County SBA Vice President
Wayne Board of Education



MESSAGE FROM THE NYSSBA AREA 2 DIRECTOR

As school boards have begun developing their budgets for the next school year, there is always the anticipation of the amount we each will receive in State Aid. In January, districts receive an initial sense as the Governor releases her proposed State budget for the coming fiscal year. But, as has "been said, "the governor proposes but the legislature disposes." As such, we await the final budget adopted by the legislature and approved by the governor; a target date of April 1st (it gives an entirely new meaning to April Fools day, doesn't it?).

I am proud of our advocacy efforts for fair and appropriate State Aid for our districts, although, I must reiterate that advocacy for fair and appropriate state funding for public education must occur throughout the year, not just during budget development time. Clearly, during this time is when legislators are focused on budget but, as they are in Albany to serve you, their constituents, it is important to have dialogue with them throughout the year. As we have looked at Governor Hochul's budget proposal for 2024-25, it almost appears like she has taken a page from the Andrew Cuomo budget play book. That is, after finally fully funding foundation aid last year, she has removed "hold harmless" for several districts reducing any increase of CPI (consumer price index; inflation) that has been given among other changes that will reduce funding to districts. Across the State, with the governor's budget proposal, over 50% of school districts will receive less State Aid for 2024-25 than they received for this school year, 2023-24. Reductions in State Aid means the difference must be made up by increasing the local tax levy, wherein we are all still under "tax levy cap" legislation. This is not the State meeting its constitutional obligation to fund education in NYS, it's more like smoke and mirrors.

At the end of January, I was in Washington DC with NYSSBA and other NYS board members advocating our federal legislators on several issues such as not reducing our Title I and II funding, mental health issues, security, meals for students, teacher shortages, etc. One week later, February 7, I joined several Area 2 school board members and Superintendents from the 4-county area in Albany at the NYSSBA lobby day. We were able to attend several meetings with the group as they presented to our legislators the harm the governor's budget would cause, the need to revisit and to finally "fix" the State Aid formula, BOCES reimbursement for districts, support for teachers, teacher shortages, mental health issues, and electric buses implementation regulations just not being feasible in timeframe given and the lack of funding to do so. I truly look forward to the opportunities to work with each of you advocating for our schools both on a federal and State level, and I appreciate you taking the time to do so, as well.

I look forward to spring in upstate NY and the opportunities for rebirth, new energy, and the inspiration it brings for me every year. I am hoping that you each have a successful conclusion to your budget development this spring and successful budget votes and school board elections in May. Please stay well and stay safe. As always, thank you for your volunteer service for the children in our communities.

Rodney George

NYSSBA Area 2 Director





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Since our November Newsletter was published, I had the opportunity to attend the Rural Schools Association Winter Conference in Saratoga Springs, where presentations focused on timely issues such as teacher recruitment and retention, student mental health, safety and the impact of social media, and electric buses.

I am excited about our planning for our 2nd Annual Spring Education Conference, which will take place on March 22 at the WFL-BOCES Conference Center in Newark. As noted on page 2 of this newsletter, we have a crackerjack lineup of presenters scheduled for the day. Our program this year differs from our conference from one year ago in that in addition to presentations focused on safety and security, we have additional presentations on topics of current interest to school board members and school administrators, such as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Artificial Intelligence, Teacher Recruitment and Retention, Leadership, and more. Our keynote speaker, David Budz will be presenting in the afternoon session this year. Scheduling Mr. Budz in the afternoon will provide him with much more time to present than he had available during the morning session last year. Mr. Budz will be presenting on the Prevention and Response to Violent Situations in our Schools and has graciously offered to remain after his presentations to respond to questions from the audience. All in all, I am very confident that folks who attend our 2nd Annual Spring Education Conference on March 22 will be quite satisfied with the programming that our presenters will offer that day.

I do not know anyone who is not looking forward to the Solar Eclipse on April 8 with great anticipation! I think it is safe to say that this event certainly qualifies as a "teachable moment." let us hope for favorable weather conditions that day! I am looking forward to enjoying the rare opportunity to experience a total solar eclipse with a couple of my sons who are flying in from out of state to enjoy the experience with me at home!

We have arranged for the New York State Teacher of the Year, Mr. Zach Arenz, to be our featured speaker at our Annual Meeting on May 16 at Club 86 in Geneva. Mr. Arenz is an instrumental and general music teacher with the Rochester City School District. We will also be joined that evening by a special guest; New York State Regent Adrian Hale, who will offer concluding remarks that evening.

Please join me in expressing our deep appreciation to members of the Legislative Committee, who have worked tirelessly throughout the year, to strengthen our advocacy efforts with local, state, and national legislators.

Stephen P. Miskell, Ed.D.

Executive Director, Four County SBA
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MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

It is now the first of March and advocacy is in high gear. A group of twelve 4 County SBA members went to NYSSBA's Lobby Day on February 7th. You can view our State Position Paper on the 4 County SBA member only page under the Legislative Committee meeting minutes. Lobby Day consisted of meeting with Assemblyman Philip Palmesano, Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes; Senator Thomas O'Mara's assistant, Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan's assistant, Assemblyman Brian Manktelow, and Senator Pam Helming. Everyone we met with was just as shocked as we were, at the proposed budget from the Governor. Most Legislators believed that the save harmless will be put back into the budget proposal but were unsure on the amount that it will be. As co-chairs we strongly advise you to go to NYSSBA's advocacy page for the templet or create your own District story and send it to your representatives in Legislature and the Governor. Brian Manktelow mentioned the effect on him of hearing student opinions on the key topics presented at a different meeting. If you have a way to get student voice into what you send, believe that it will be heard! During our meetings, we pressed further on the issues that will come with our budgets if it goes the way she had proposed. The Electric Bus proposal is clearly understood from our meetings that it is just not going to work with the infrastructure and cost of buses for rural communities. The last item we touched on was mental health issues for both staff and students and staffing of professionals in schools to help with those needs.

Currently the group is working on the 2024 Federal Position Paper. We have discussed what needs to stay from the 2023 paper and topics needed to be emphasized more. There are six areas of focus: Title I and Title II, the Perkins Bill, IDEA, nutrition, and re-authorization of the Pell grant. We are looking for specific examples of what each of the six areas does for districts or regionally and any pictures you can share. Please email Sue with your examples and or pictures. On March 9th the committee will discuss what each group found, add the examples to the 2024 Federal Position Paper, and thin out what is not relevant from the 2023 paper. We hope to see everyone on March 9th!



Julie Nevelizer

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